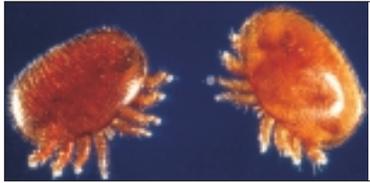


USDA photo Scott Bauer



State Apiarist Phil Craft (right) assists beekeepers all over the state, including these in Floyd County. Much of Craft's time is spent helping beekeepers test for and fight pests such as the Varroa mite (above).

Ray Tackett photo



Apiarist services

The growth of horticulture in Kentucky agriculture presents a challenge and opportunity for the state's beekeepers. Some who began as honey producers are finding more demand for their bees for **pollination**.

State Apiarist Phil Craft said, "Only a few of our beekeepers can manage to offer pollination services to farmers now."

Craft has been working with beekeepers statewide, to inform them of funding available to improve their operations.

He also helps recruit new beekeepers, and hones the skills of veterans, in **workshops** provided by KDA and by many universities and

beekeeping associations throughout the state.

Last summer Craft played a key role as Midway College hosted the convention of the **Heartland Apicultural Society**, a regional association for beekeeper education.

"The value of beekeeping as a source of pollination for crops as well as a producer of commodities such as honey is tremendous," Craft said.

"Our beekeepers have suffered economic loss due to insect disease and pests. KDA is working to assist them and thereby help the farmers whose crops depend on this vital service."

Education

KDA works to educate Kentucky citizens of all ages about the importance of agriculture in daily life.

KDA administers the Kentucky Agriculture and Environment in the Classroom (KAEC) program, which in 2002 introduced a new **Mobile Science Activity Center**.

The 42-foot-long vehicle visits 50 schools per year in two- to four-day visits throughout the state and is open to the public during the Kentucky State Fair and other major statewide events. It contains 10 work stations for students to conduct entertaining, hands-on lab investigations related to agriculture and the environment.

The popular activity center is booked for most of the 2003-2004 school year, and bookings were being taken for fall 2004 at press time.

KAEC also conducts **workshops for educators**, helping them integrate agriculture and the environment into their curricula. KAEC has sponsored 126 workshops reaching 3,242 teachers, student teachers and non-formal educators since mid-1992, making possible enhanced agriculture instruction for over 89,000 Kentucky students.

The Mobile Science Activity Center provides interesting, hands-on activities during visits to Kentucky schools.

